



# La Voz de Esperanza

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Editor: Gloria A. Ramirez  
Editorial Assistance: Lillian Stevens  
Design: Elizandro Carrington

## Contributors

Luz Guerra, María Eugenia Guerra, Julio César Guerrero Julio Noboa Polanco, Gianna Elvia Rendón, Rogelio Sáenz, Lillian Stevens

## La Voz Mail Collective

Alicia Arredondo, Angela Bernal, Irasema Cavazos, Olga Crespín, Pauline Enriquez, Ray Garza, Aaron Havel, Gloria Hernández, Marisela Martínez, Ray McDonald, Angie Merla, Nezi, María Quezada, Gianna Rendón, Yolanda Salazar, Adolfo Segura, Guadalupe Segura, Brittany Sharp, Roger Singler, Juan Torres, Sandra Torres, Clara Valdez, Margaret F. Valdez, Helen Villarreal. Rosa Vega, José Zertuche,

## Esperanza Director

Graciela I. Sánchez

## Esperanza Staff

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- We advocate for a wide variety of social, economic & environmental justice issues.
- Opinions expressed in La Voz are not necessarily those of the Esperanza Center.

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Esperanza Peace & Justice Center  
922 San Pedro, San Antonio,  
TX 78212  
210.228.0201

[www.esperanzacenter.org](http://www.esperanzacenter.org)

Inquiries/Articles can be sent to:

[lavoz@esperanzacenter.org](mailto:lavoz@esperanzacenter.org)

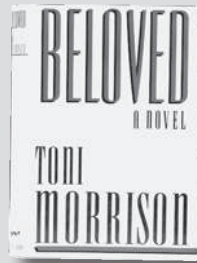
Articles due by the 8th of each month

## Policy Statements

\* We ask that articles be visionary, progressive, instructive & thoughtful. Submissions must be literate & critical; not sexist, racist, homophobic, violent, or oppressive & may be edited for length.

\* All letters in response to Esperanza activities or articles in La Voz will be considered for publication. Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.

# Toni Morrison (née Chloe Ardelia Wofford) 1931-2019



Toni Morrison was OUR writer. She wrote for Black people. She is quoted as saying,

“If there is a book that you want to read, but it hasn’t been written yet, you must be the one to write it.”

That is what she did. She wrote *Beloved* as a monument to slavery, because this country had no such monuments.

I remember how white people complained that they couldn’t understand her novels. Many conscious, white people understand Morrison’s writings. James Joyce wrote “Finnegan’s Wake”, full of gibberish (excused as portmanteau) and rendering him a preeminent writer.

“Beloved” wasn’t gibberish, it was history, it was metaphor, it was symbolism; it was written FOR Black people and we understood. Many people understood the brilliance of Toni Morrison’s writings; she was the first Black woman writer to win the Noble Prize in Literature in 1993, as a result. Morrison wrote many brilliant novels, nonfiction books and articles.

E.L. Doctorow, in his misguided attempt to compliment Morrison as a writer once said to her that he didn’t consider her a “woman writer” or an “African American writer”, he considered her...she interrupted with “a white, male writer?” She was proud to call herself a Female, Black writer. Nothing less.

Toni Morrison set an example for all of us: we can’t separate out what we do from what is going on in the world. We have a moral obligation to acknowledge it; as writers, we must write about it. Indeed she did. —Lillian Stevens

The quote on the front cover of La Voz comes from “Making America White Again” an article by Toni Morrison that appeared in the New York Times on November 21, 2016. The quote continues: “These people are not so much angry as terrified, with the kind of terror that makes knees tremble. When I hold these two quotes in mind, I cannot summon up sympathy for “these people” who are terrified of the “consequences of a collapse of white privilege”. White supremacist thinking has resulted in terrorism since the birth of this nation and now “they” must face up to the fact that, yes, they are losing power.

When I went shopping at North Star Mall during the recent tax-free weekend it was very crowded with people—many kinds of people: different colors, different ages and ability levels, different genders and sexualities, different sizes, different cultures and languages—everyone excited—and having a good time. I wondered if I were a white nationalist would I be comfortable among these folks? Probably not. I, however, was happy to be among all these kinds of people who seemed only to exude love for each other. No fear, no hate.

It is my hope that we do not allow ourselves to become isolated and stop gathering in groups to shop, to play, to sing, to dance, to be together. The few white folks I saw there seemed fine, too. So, what is it that would make those—white supremacists—so “terrified, with the kind of terror that makes knees tremble?”

I think that, perhaps, the terror that makes their knees tremble is the realization that they have been found out—that we now know that they are NOT superior to us in any way and that they have committed so many atrocities in the name of “white supremacy.” That is a shameful realization that certainly would cause my knees to tremble. They are simply plain folks who, perhaps, will finally let go of the myth of white supremacy. They certainly would be better off being, one of us.

—Gloria A. Ramirez, editor of La Voz de Esperanza

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**VOZ VISION STATEMENT:** La Voz de Esperanza speaks for many individual, progressive voices who are gente-based, multi-visioned and milagro-bound. We are diverse survivors of materialism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, classism, violence, earth-damage, speciesism and cultural and political oppression. We are recapturing the powers of alliance, activism and healthy conflict in order to achieve interdependent economic/spiritual healing and fuerza. La Voz is a resource for peace, justice, and human rights, providing a forum for criticism, information, education, humor and other creative works. La Voz provokes bold actions in response to local and global problems, with the knowledge that the many risks we take for the earth, our body, and the dignity of all people will result in profound change for the seven generations to come.